

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY China

DATE DISTR 31 MAY 50

SUBJECT Conditions in Peiping

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF
INFO.

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. Foreign residents of Peiping became increasingly nervous during April and March, and for no discernable reason some were given residence permits for six months, some for twelve months, and some none at all on registering with the authorities. These authorities seemed particularly fickle and severe with missionaries.
2. More and more effort is being spent on making Peiping beautiful so that it will be the show place of the country. A member of the city planning committee was frank to admit that the current joke about the authorities not being satisfied until the lights of Peiping shone more brightly than those of Moscow was quite true.
3. The countryside around Peiping has been stripped in favor of the city. Many peasants who returned to the land after the occupation of Peiping by the Communists soon came back. Poor conditions in the country are explained by the authorities as difficulties of distribution; in this way they account for the need for Soviet aid in transportation reconstruction.
4. Travelers between Peiping and Shanghai say that the Soviet advisers in Peiping are much more guarded in their speech and actions than those in Shanghai. PAC Tse-tung's long absence in Moscow and his long silence on his return created a great measure of suspicion among the people of Peiping. Already suspicious of a stranger who had assumed the role of leader and negotiator for China, they found his action very un-Chinese. All government action seemed suspended, and all party circles waited for a change in the line.
5. The Chinese residents of Peiping carry on endless discussions comparing the Chinese Communist Army with Japanese and American armies they have knowledge of, finding the Chinese the better.
6. The Chinese Communist Party has kept its grip on the students and professors of the Peiping area. These groups are still required to attend six hours of

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Document No. 11

No Change in Class. ☐☒ Declassified

Class. Changed To: TS S C

Auth.: HR 70-2

Date: 130678

By: 025

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courses a week in dialectic and historical materialism. All courses are slanted toward the Communist Party line. Even in February FENG Yu-lan, elderly professor at Tsinghua University, with some of his colleagues made an expedition into the country to alleviate the land problem by subdivision and reclamation. He was subject to much cynical criticism from other university professors.

7. Even though there is continuous criticism of the government programs on the part of teachers and students, it is relatively minor. Word passed by student organizations is sufficient for the Communist authorities to call off a demonstration, whereas police and troops have had to be used by Nationalists in the past.
8. In Peiping, at least, the Communist regime seemed to gain control of economic affairs only by slow degrees, much to the amazement of Chinese and foreigners. By the time they had control, famine in North China made their programs seem far less than ideal. Recently, furthermore, an increasing number of students are growing restive under the continuous propaganda, especially with its obvious emphasis on Soviet cooperation. The necessary unreasoning adherence to first principles and revolutionary faith is not sufficient to counteract the growing awareness of the conflict between the projection of the USSR and the furtherance of China. Two questions are quoted as having been raised in student discussion meetings are: Why if the industrialization of China is our first task do we accept the small help of the USSR when we can have the backing of the US? and Does collectivization in China entail the same misery as it did in the USSR?
9. With the press and radio, however, control was instantly assumed and readers and listeners very early became acquainted with several terms in the A-B-C of Communism, among the first of which was deviationism. Control of the press and radio is still a definite source of strength to the Government. The Voice of America reaches no major audience in North China.

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